

structure, form and style



Dr Richard Fellows

Richard's architectural education took place in the late '60s and early '70s. He is a registered architect. He has worked in architectural education since the mid '70s, and has been 'year tutor' for all five years of the full-time Architecture course. He is Head of the Department of Architecture and 3D Design, incorporating a suite of architecture and construction based courses, interior design, product design and transport design.



Although employed principally as a design tutor, he has taught architectural history extensively, and contributed to many courses, study days and conferences. In the early '80s, for instance, he was involved in Tim Benton's Open University A305 unit, History of Architecture 1890-1939.

He believes that a familiarity with the way architects have worked in the past helps to illuminate how they design in the present, and, therefore, to assist in the design tuition of students. He also believes that different branches of design can learn a lot from each other.



Richard's research interests began with frustration about the way in which a good deal of late 19th and early 20th Century architecture had been 'air brushed' out of history, by those wishing to present a view of the Modern Movement as an inevitable outcome of a linear process of evolutionary development. This was absorbed uncritically by many students of his generation, and they displayed almost complete ignorance about the buildings that make up the bulk of our town and city centres, or inspire suburban housing.

In 1975 he began research on the work of the architect Sir Reginald Blomfield (1856-1942), whose career encompassed, perhaps more than any other figure, the complex issues of late 19th Century and early 20th Century professional practice. He undertook an MPhil degree on the subject at the Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies, University of York, and went on to develop it into a



monograph, Sir Reginald Blomfield, an Edwardian Architect (London, 1985) which was launched in conjunction with an exhibition of the architect's work that he organised at the Heinz Gallery, Portman Square, London.

In further developing the theme, he went on to write two more books on the subject: Edwardian Architecture; Style and Technology (London, 1995) and Edwardian Civic Buildings and Their Details (Oxford, 1999). What the researches show is that as far as use of new constructional and services technologies were concerned, many Edwardian buildings were as advanced as later Modernist buildings, despite their stylistic references. As far as the realisation of the functional programme of the buildings was concerned, in many instances, late Victorian and Edwardian buildings were as competent with regard to spatial disposition as anything produced by Modernist architects.



This was in addition to, of course, the shades of meaning introduced into these buildings to fulfil conditions of appropriateness and propriety.

Virtually all major buildings of the period incorporate the work of artists and craftsmen which is fully integrated into the design.

Integration into townscape, and concern with space and urban scale, is normally largely resolved.

Richard has followed up these studies of Edwardian architecture with further research and has submitted his publications, together with a 20,000 word thematic interpretation, in fulfilment of a PhD degree, awarded in October 2009.

The work has not stopped, as not only are buildings of the period now respected, but several of them are being updated, modified or incorporated into major urban renewal schemes.

In addition, Richard continues his interest in exploration of building types, particularly where issues of appropriateness to culture and climate are concerned.

